

182 with men and women of Swazi clans. There were two Ngoni practices
 581 which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a
 182 binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows
 581 by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if
 587 the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her
 needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this inheritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

182 Another Ngoni practice was that of giving an *nhlansi*, a substitute or
 581 additional wife. If, after a marriage had taken place and cattle had been
 585 handed over, the wife appeared to be barren, her family might give another daughter as *nhlansi*, without further transfer of cattle, to bear children for her older sister whose house she entered. These children were always referred to as children of the house of A, the earlier married wife, even if they were borne by B, her *nhlansi*. Sometimes, even if the first daughter given in marriage bore children, an *nhlansi* might still be given without additional cattle being transferred, because the bride's family were pleased with her treatment in her husband's village and wished to compliment the man as a good husband.

58 There were four main stages in Ngoni marriage, in all of which the houses played an essential part. The first was the selection of partners and securing the consent of the families; the second the negotiations from the betrothal onwards, centring round the transfer of cattle; the third the series of feasts culminating in the marriage feast itself; and the fourth the assimilation of the new wife into her husband's family, house and village.

584 The selection of a marriage partner might take place in more than one way. There was direct courtship by the man; there was an indicated choice by the girl; there were marriages arranged by the parents; and there was direction of a son by his parents towards a suitable partner.

[582] In addition to clan exogamy and parallel cousin prohibition, there was in pre-European days a prohibition upon marriage between children of age mates in the same village. For girls of Swazi clans marriages were generally arranged, though informants insisted that in most cases the personal preferences of both partners were considered. A young man of a Swazi clan was told that in one village there was X, in another Y, with whom a suitable marriage might be made. Having taken this hint, and

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nshansi*)⁷
subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren
then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was
never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her
husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
587 became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died
before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

842 If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
837 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason
for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught
he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having
been called in by the husband.⁸

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On
684 this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
always killed;⁹ all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I
was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person
he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband
persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants
of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's
first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed
by one of the senior lieutenants.

562 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[837] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and
fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite
and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was
a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed
modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance
to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented
the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's
parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A
woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants
agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by
sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as
an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth
for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

⁷ Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nshansi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nshansi*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inhansi* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nshansi*, and some *nshansi* are not substitutes.

⁸ See below, p. 34.

⁹ Wiese, op. cit. 'Expeditio . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

583 was left to the discretion of her father. 'Snuff-box' was handed over before the man began to sleep with his bride while bridewealth could be paid either then or later after the woman had borne children. Once bridewealth had been paid the rights of the man's group were definitely established and, in the event of the man's death, one of his younger brothers became the widow's pro-husband in leviratic marriage.

583 The significance of bridewealth is clearly indicated by the procedure followed in marriages in which it was not paid. If a man paid 'snuff-box' and then died before he paid bridewealth, the children of the marriage belonged to his wife's kinsmen and not to his kinsmen. His brothers could secure the woman as the wife of one of them, and the children as legitimate members of their segment, by payment of bridewealth. It is said that a woman could refuse to go to a brother of her dead husband under these conditions but that she could not refuse to give up the children to the husband's kinsman who paid bridewealth. If although bridewealth had been paid she went off and married another unrelated man the children she bore to her new husband belonged to her dead husband's kin.

583 Some informants say that if a man died without having paid bridewealth his sons were under an obligation to pay cattle to their mother's kin on behalf of their dead father, but I did not hear of any instance in which this had been done. Similarly it is said that if a man had paid bridewealth but had never been given a linked co-wife, his son could claim a wife from the kin of the woman for whom bridewealth had been handed over. Other informants deny this possibility, and say that it was the man's son's son who could have made this claim. I did not hear of any instances of either practice in the past and when recently a chief tried to claim a wife on the strength of bridewealth offered by his father, he failed.

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154 Important men sometimes married female captives and no bridewealth passed. These wives were usually not of high status and their sons founded lines junior to those of sons by other wives for whom bridewealth had been paid.

583 The general impression gained from the tales of old informants and from the contemporary literature is that 'snuff-box' and bride-wealth were paid in most marriages. The evidence, such as it is, from a survey of the marriages experienced since birth by men and women alive in 1946-9 suggests that this was not so. The way in which this survey was conducted is described below.¹³ The information on pre-1898 marriages is set out in Tables I and II.

128 It will be seen that in half (7 out of 14) of these marriages, no payments at all were offered. In the marriage in which 'snuff-box' was offered it consisted not of a beast but of a quantity of tobacco. In about a third of the marriages the only payment made was the 'legalization payment', which traditionally was not part of the pre-1898

¹³ See pp. 22f.

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on. 595
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Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.²¹ Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendants senior to the lines springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast²² to his wife's father when he received a linked co-wife. [558]
[554]
[583]

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her. [588]

7. The levirate

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became 581
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²¹ Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

²² Called variously *mceha* or *mtoso*. *Mceha* is an Nsenga word meaning a small cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language. [192]
[291]

587 her pro-husband. If there was no younger brother the pro-husband was one of her husband's junior patrilineal kinsmen of his own generation. She could not refuse a pro-husband although her husband's brothers could choose not to provide her with a pro-husband if they so wished. The widow continued to live in her own cluster where her pro-husband came to visit her. Rattray states that widows waited one year after their husband's death before their re-marriage was settled²³ and this is nowadays the traditional procedure. Wiese, however, writes that widows waited four years before they could marry again.²⁴ The children begotten by the pro-husband were regarded as children of the dead man for social purposes but the identity of their genitor was not disguised. They called him *father*, but this was as much because he was their dead pater's brother and their mother's pro-husband as because he was their genitor.

584 The same principle of substitution was applied to betrothal. If a
851 man died before marrying a girl to whom he was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger brother or a classificatory brother. If a girl died before marrying the man to whom she was betrothed, the betrothal passed to a younger sister. Unlike the operation of the levirate, however, the children of this type of marriage were regarded as the children of their genitor and genetrix for all purposes, as though their parents had been betrothed to each other in the first place. Again, unlike the levirate, if a man considered himself too old when his betrothed became marriageable he might give her instead to his son as a wife. The children of this marriage were also regarded for all purposes as the children of their genitor and genetrix.

587 Occasionally a woman whose husband died young, went to live with a man who was not her dead husband's brother, real or classificatory. The pro-husband gave a goat to the woman, but if bride-wealth had been offered for her by her first husband, the pro-husband could never gain permanent custody of the children. The children that she bore by him belonged to the segment of the dead man, took his descent name, and when old enough went to live in his segment. When the dead man's kinsmen claimed these children, they gave a beast to their genitor 'to straighten his back', that is, for his labour in begetting them. This arrangement is in some ways analogous to Nuer widow-concubinage²⁵ but with the important difference that the pro-husband, although not a kinsman of the dead man, had rights in the widow as a wife and an exclusive right to her sexual services. It seems that the status of a widow living in this kind of union was not low. In one instance I heard of, very aristocratic families were involved, and the arrangement appears to have been

²³ Rattray, op. cit., p. 97.

²⁴ Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedição . . .', p. 474, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 192.

²⁵ Cf. Evans-Pritchard, *Some Aspects of Marriage and Family Among the Nuer* (Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. Eleven), p. 18.

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return of the children to their pater's kinsmen. [587] [851]

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions into which the nation was split residually, with a senior queen in charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers while retaining a common allegiance to him. [595] [592] [644] [631]

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent and succession were traced through males, the pattern of segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetuated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from them. [593] [182] [562]

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives [594] [613] [554] [855] [869] [603]

he has not been brought up by them but by some other relative. In particular a man is reluctant to discuss his affairs directly with his father if he can get his eldest brother to act as his intermediary. The eldest brother is heir to their father and it is considered that he should act as the channel by which the father is approached. He deals with proposals of marriage arising from his younger siblings and if he approves of them, he refers the matter to their father. This pattern of relations seems most marked in aristocratic families. [184] 593

9. Widows

While it is a man's eldest brother who helps to arrange his marriage, it is his younger brothers who become pro-husbands to his widows. We have seen that in the old days a widow was usually looked after by a younger brother of the dead man but she continued to live in her dead husband's segment, and the children she bore by her pro-husband were grouped with the children of the dead man. This can still happen but it is no longer the invariable rule. As in the old days, if bridewealth has been paid by the first husband and after his death his widow goes to live with someone else, the second husband or pro-husband cannot offer bridewealth and the children he begets belong to the dead husband and take his descent name. 587 ● 581

Some indication of the extent to which widows remain with their dead husbands' kin is given by data collected in two villages. All the women now living in these villages had between them experienced widowhood 31 times. In two instances (6 per cent) the widow had been cared for by her dead husband's brother; and in 11 instances (35 per cent) the widow took a new husband not directly related to the dead man. In the remaining 18 instances (58 per cent) the widow had not married again and was living alone. 581 [589]

A man may die at any stage of his marriage. If he is betrothed to a girl and then dies, the betrothal passes to a younger brother. When the girl is old enough, the younger brother marries her as though she had been betrothed to him in the first place and the children he has by her are his own children. Similarly, if a betrothed girl dies before she is married, the betrothal passes to a younger sister. 584

If a man dies after he has been properly married his widows have definite roles to play. For a month after his death, they must wear the signs of mourning, and they are in danger of *mdulo*²⁴ if they commit adultery during that time. They must be ready to wail when distant visitors arrive to mourn. At the end of a month they brew beer, and there is a joyous party. A year after the death there is another party, and the fate of the widows is discussed. If none of the younger brothers or kinsmen of the dead man wish to look after the widows, they are free to go their own way, and there may be a formal statement of divorce. They are in any case now spoken 765 589

²⁴ See above, p. 46.

589 of as being divorced from the dead man. If they do not themselves wish to be inherited they cannot be forced to remain.

589 If a widow is cared for by a younger brother of her dead husband, and that man already has a wife of his own, the widow is regarded as inferior in status to the man's own wife. Yet any children she has by him count as if they were children by the dead husband, and as such they inherit his cattle and offices before the brother's children by his own wife. This apparent paradox is due to the nature of Ngoni seniority. Seniority was always associated with position in a definite segment in the old residential system. The widow belongs to the segment of her dead husband, and even today if she is a queen she ought to stay there after she has been given a pro-husband. If she moves to live in proximity to her pro-husband, she comes into the ranking system of which the pro-husband's great wife is the superior. Her children are, however, still associated with the segment from whence she came.

589 The new husband, whether he is a kinsman of the dead man or not, pays one goat, also known as 'snuff-box', on taking the woman, and this animal she keeps herself, and does not hand on to her father or brother. If no bridewealth was paid by the first husband, the children borne to the second take the descent name of their own father and his rights in the marriage are the same as if he were marrying the woman for the first time and had made the legalization payment.

589 There is then an opportunity for the marriage to continue after the death of the man if his wife and his kinsmen are both agreeable. If the widow wishes to go her own way, she can do so, and if his kinsmen do not wish to care for her, they need not. Even if they do not like the woman they cannot turn her out of the village, and she can go on living in her dead husband's hut and cultivating the same garden as before. She may even re-marry and bring in her new husband to live with her in her dead spouse's village. The extent to which this can be done without quarrelling depends very much on the personalities of the people involved. If the widow decides to go back to her own village, her husband's kin may try to prevent her removing possessions of which the ownership is not certain, and she should discuss with them how much of the crops she can take away from her garden.

589 Nowadays the death of a wife brings the marriage to an end. We have seen that in the old days the dead woman was replaced by a linked co-wife, and that this institution has now all but disappeared. There is no other form of sororate, and although a man may sometimes in jest address his wife's sister as *wife*, he has no rights over her.

593 The specific responsibilities of brothers towards a man's marriage are demonstrated in the role of the elder brother as a marriage negotiator and of the younger brother as potential husbands for a man's widows. A man would not, save in exceptional circumstances,

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily.

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission.

6. The transfer of rights

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights in *uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights in *genetricem*.⁴ If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box'

⁴ I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

583 had been paid, it was her husband and not her father who initiated
593 proceedings against her and her lover. Residence was equated
613 with political allegiance, and therefore it was inappropriate that
[591] her children should live in their father's village until he had acquired
rights in them, that is until he had acquired rights in *genetricem*
in his wife. These rights were transferred with the payment of
bridewealth. The holder of the rights both in *uxorem* and in
genetricem was the husband, but on his death the rights in *uxorem*
passed to a junior patrilineal kinsman of the same generation while
the rights in *genetricem* remained in the man's own segment. If the
woman was barren, it was incumbent on those who had been
recompensed for the transfer of rights in *genetricem* to provide
another wife whose children occupied the position of children of
the barren wife.

[428] Nowadays the legalization payment confers rights in *uxorem*
and bridewealth rights in *genetricem*. Rights in *genetricem* are
inherited in the same way as before, but rights in *uxorem* do not
pass automatically to a younger brother of the husband on his
death. If a widow agrees to be inherited, and a younger brother
[587] willing to have her, then he acquires rights in *uxorem* over her without
any further legalization payment. If, however, either no younger
brother is forthcoming or the widow is unwilling, the rights revert
to the woman's own group, who cannot themselves exercise them.
When she takes a new husband he makes the legalization payment
to them, and not to the kin of the dead husband, and thereby acquires
his rights in *uxorem*. If rights in *genetricem* have already been
transferred to the dead husband, the new husband can never acquire
them. If at the beginning of a marriage bridewealth is offered, its
acceptance transfers both rights in *uxorem* and in *genetricem*.

611 Whereas the rights in *genetricem* were definite in the old system,
591 in the new they are vague and of doubtful value. In the old scheme
602 they were related to position in a residential system of which one
198 of the generating principles was patrilineal descent and succession.
With the breakdown of this system one can no longer say so clearly
that a man belongs to one group of kinsmen rather than another.
The lineage segment is no longer a significant group with spatial
reference and a hierarchy of authority. Kinsmen, however related,
who live near one another tend to help each other, visit one another,
and support each other in quarrels and in visits to court. Some of
the men and women who go to court in support of A will also go in
support of B, while others will not. B shares certain supporters with
C, and so on. The men and women who are relatives and neighbours
611 cannot be divided into a collection of mutually exclusive groups,
591 for membership of one man's group partly overlaps with membership
602 of another's, and every man has, as it were, a different set of people,
some of them patrilineal kin, some matrilineal, and some affines,
whom he is prepared to support. There is no widely-held indigenous
theory of procreation such as in other cultures provides a rationaliza-

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when they see these they will consult the village lots, and the oracle will tell them it is the spirit of their relation who is asking for beer." And when the beer is finished they honour (use *kuonga*) him by saying, "Hail to him of so and so's clan-animal name." Then the chief mourners commence to pull down the hut in which the man died, and when they have done so they take water and wash their hands. Then they take a little pot and dig a hole at the hut door (they have just demolished), and put the pot in, and fill in the earth, the rim only of the pot being visible, and they knock a hole in the bottom of the pot, and they take beer and pour it into the pot, and it goes right through into the ground; and they take a potsherd and cover over the pot, and over that place the old grass door, and pin down the door with a bamboo stick, and take a gourd-cup, and having broken the handle, hang it on the bamboo. When they have done all this they bring out the beer of the chief mourners and dance, perhaps the *Chitoto* dance.

VI. On that day the widows may again meet face to face with men. For another year they hoe by themselves, and then some old person comes to speak to them, saying, "The mourning is now long past, get some malt, and look out for another husband (use *kugana*); when water gets spilt (people) do not pick it up." And then they begin to hurry on the beer, and when it is ready all the chief mourners (and all who took part in the funeral) come and spend the night dancing. The widows get up early in the morning, and take a gourd of beer and go with it to the stream, and take off their bands, and set fire to them and quench the fire with the beer. Then the elders say, "Come, let us take the widows, who are now eligible for marriage again." And they tell some very old women to go to the *Kuka*

765 hut and tell the women that so and so is wishing
● 587 to marry them, and take the place of him who died.
At first the women refuse, saying, "We do not
want (to marry again) but to go on mourning," and
the old women go off and tell the men, who are
congregated at the village court. The men say,
"Oh, that is what they say, is it?" and they take
their knobkerries and give them to the old women,
who go off again to the women and produce the
knobkerries. Say they, "This is so and so's, this
so and so's." And the women take the one of him
they wish to marry. When they have received the
stick, the old women come out again to say, "She,
who is now an eligible widow, wants so and so."
And he, the man, then sends some one to bring out
the beer from the hut [where the women are]. The
man whom she loves then goes off to the medicine
man to get medicine, and takes that for which the
medicine is pounded. And the doctor gives him it,
saying, "But go and bathe your former wife (or
wives), before you enter the hut of her who is a
widow." And he takes the medicine, and goes
and gives it to his former wife, saying, "There is
medicine, you must go and bathe." And he goes
to the hut of his new wife, and takes a potsherd
and sets it on the fire near the doorway. When it
gets hot he pours in some water, and then some of
the medicine. Then the man takes some of the mix-
ture, puts his fingers to his lips, and smears his
knees with it. Then the woman does the same.
Some other medicine is in a pot. The woman stirs it
round with a stick which has a little piece of wood
fastened to one end, which she revolves in the
hands (as if making fire); this pot she then lifts
and goes with it to where cross-roads meet, and
here the man bathes, and then the woman. In the
evening they take a hen and put it at one end of

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the hut "towards the feet," and then they sleep together. Next morning a relation of the man who died comes and takes away the fowl, going with it to the house of the man's mother. The spirit follows the fowl. When the man has lived some time with the woman, and if he does not get on with her, he just leaves her, and his companions say, "He only went to get his bows." If the woman wants to marry any one else she can do so, without any further medicine.

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THE FUNERAL OF AN ANGONI CHIEF

I. WHEN the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them "the clouds have fallen to-day." They do this because they fear, "if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death." Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup, and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not

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842 otherwise male of the child will still result. Medicine is taken also by women who are unable to conceive. If it fails, it is because a spirit has entered the womb; and lots are taken to find whose spirit it is, after which sacrifices are offered until the desired result is obtained.

8. Dissolution of Marriage (Chewa).

586 The Achewa have no form of legal separation by agreement, and a divorce can be effected only where adequate reason exists. A husband may not divorce his wife on account of barrenness; but he may divorce her for adultery or desertion; or if she persistently neglects to cook food, bring water or perform her other work; or if she is offensively and perpetually jealous. A wife may divorce her husband if he is impotent; or if he fails to maintain a habitable house, or to do his share of the work; or if he fails to pay her tax, feed and clothe her properly; or on account of desertion or ill-treatment. Effect is given to the divorce after the hearing of the case by the husband handing over a fowl or other token, always known as *mbere*³ (an arrow), in the presence of the *ankhosi*⁴ to the wife's father, who passes it on to her *mbidweni*⁴. The wife always keeps the children, even if she has been at fault; though sometimes in very flagrant cases one or more fully-grown children may be awarded to the husband; and in adultery the co-respondent is obliged to pay heavy damages as compensation for the loss of the children, and the value of several years' tax is refunded by the *mbidweni*. A woman may not be divorced while she is pregnant.

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9. Marriage of Widows (Chewa).

587 A widow may not be courted until after the conclusion of the funeral ceremonies described in Section VII. When, a few months later, she has to make her choice, she brews beer at her own house, and on the evening of the *tsiku* *tsakumbula* her suitors, friends and relations foregather outside; the eldest female relation holds before her pieces of *tsakere*⁵ grass, and tells her which of the suitors each piece represents. Then she signifies her choice by taking the appropriate piece in her hand; and the old woman proceeds to the house of the chosen one, selects therefrom a knife or other small article, and hands it to the widow. In due course the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, brings a cow, sheep, goat or fowl, according to his means, and ties it to the centre post of the widow's house, in order to get rid of the spirit of her late husband; otherwise, he will not be able to beget a child. The widow brings out beer; her relations subsequently remove the animal from the centre post, and at night the bridal pair sleep apart in the house. Next day they procure medicine from a doctor and put it in a big pot in the house; and in the evening first the man and then the woman bathes in it. That night they again abstain from conjugal intercourse; but at cockcrow, after bathing a second time in the pot, they take it outside the village to a place where two paths meet, and break it there, thus finally and completely ridding themselves of the spirit of the first husband. They return to the village before it is light, and then commence their married life.

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³ Cf. H. B. Stammers, *Journ. Roy. Anthropol. Inst.*, 1910, vol. xl, p. 208.

⁵ *Tsakere*, a long coarse grass used for thatching.